

April 2001



Montana Board of Pharmacy

Published to promote voluntary compliance of pharmacy and drug law.

PO Box 200513, 111 N Jackson, Helena, MT 59620-0513

Words from the Executive Director

By Rebecca "Becky" Deschamps, RPh

Telemedicine Update

An out-of-state physician recently sent the following e-mail to the Montana Board of Pharmacy office. "I often call in prescriptions to out-of-state pharmacies. I have found out recently that some states consider prescriptions 'invalid' if the physician has not actually seen the patient. I can't believe this but am assured it is true... I only call in non-controlled prescriptions. Please advise."

The practice of telemedicine in Montana without a telemedicine certificate is a criminal offense. As of March 1, 2001, no physicians have become licensed to practice telemedicine in Montana, although the Board of Medical Examiners has recently received two applications. A physician's certification to practice telemedicine in Montana can be verified by calling the Montana Board of Medical Examiners at 406/841-2364.

Telemedicine may only be practiced with respect to the specialty in which the physician is board certified or meets the current requirements to take the specialty board certification exam. In addition, the Board of Pharmacy requires that the prescribing practitioner be practicing within the scope of his or her practice and that a **valid patient/practitioner relationship exists**. The Federation of State Medical Boards states that the prescribing of medications based solely on an electronic medical questionnaire clearly fails to meet this standard of care.

As a Montana pharmacist, you have the right and obligation to satisfy yourself that the above criteria are met before filling a prescription. It is a matter of patient safety.

Notes from the Field

By Thomas Mensing, RPh, Compliance Specialist

Illicit/Forged Prescriptions

During the past twelve months we have seen an increase in the presentation of illicit or forged prescriptions in Mon-

tana. Many of the current crop of drug seekers or abusers are very clever; most have a working knowledge of pharmacies and pharmacists. Some know your unlisted phone numbers as well as physicians' Drug Enforcement Administration numbers. Drug seekers also know the busy hours in your pharmacy and have multiple aliases.

Pharmacists and physicians are urged to use extreme caution when prescribing or filling prescriptions for narcotic drugs. The latest information the Board has indicates that hydrocodone and its combinations are the street drug-of-choice with OxyContin becoming a new favorite as well.

There are certain guidelines pharmacists can follow for filling prescriptions for any narcotic or controlled substance:

- ◆ Know your patient and his or her diagnosis; ask questions, especially of first-time patients.
- ◆ Watch for controlled substance prescriptions written for large quantities; evaluate the ordered dosage.
- ◆ Always verify telephoned and faxed prescriptions.
- ◆ Inspect the quality of prescription paper presented for alterations or forgeries. If the parts written in ink do not smudge, the entire prescription may have been photocopied.

Should you be presented with an illicit prescription, contact law enforcement authorities. If the script bears the name of a practicing prescriber, inform the prescriber as soon as possible. Notify other area pharmacies as well as local and state pharmacy associations.

Other precautions to address in your pharmacy are:

- ◆ Establish dispensing guidelines for all prescription drugs, especially scheduled products.
- ◆ Post dispensing regulations and store policies in a prominent location.
- ◆ Install Caller ID on the pharmacy phone.
- ◆ Maintain a professional demeanor with patients at all times.
- ◆ Use a witness or mounted video camera to document confrontational encounters.

If a script is questionable, you may be well advised not to dispense it.

Pharmacist License Renewals

All registered pharmacist licenses will expire June 30, 2001. Renewal forms will be mailed by April 13, 2001. If you have moved in the past year, please be sure the Board office has your current mailing address. You can fax any address change to the office at 406/841-2343 or e-mail it to compolpha@state.mt.us. If your renewal is returned to you for any reason, please complete the requested information and return it to the Board office in a timely fashion. The envelope containing your renewal must bear an official United States Postal Service postmark dated no later than June 30, 2001. If the postmark is later than June 30, please be sure to remit the penalty fee of an additional \$55. If you do not renew your license by June 30, 2001, it is unlawful to practice pharmacy in Montana until such time as your license has been renewed. To avoid being unable to work on July 1, 2001, mail your renewal before June 25, 2001. Anything mailed after that date may result in your license not being processed and sent back to you by July 1, 2001.

You will not need to report specific continuing education courses on your renewal form this year. You will be asked on your renewal if you completed the continuing education requirements for this year. After all renewals have been processed, a random audit of 10% of the licensed pharmacists will be performed. If you are audited, you will have a limited time to submit proof of courses attended to the Board office. Please remember that continuing education requirements are the same for in-state and out-of-state pharmacists.

The following licensees must renew their license by June 30, 2001, or their licenses will be revoked for non-renewal, and they will have to reapply and reexamine for their Montana license to practice pharmacy. This *Newsletter* serves as official notification to each of the following licensees: R. Miles #3597; T. Hanna #3284; M. Scholberg #2887; A. Johnsen #2785; K. Omgvig #3259; J. Studsrud #2499; D. Studsrud #2527; M. Buck #2951; C. Davis #2042; W. Fey #2020; G. Ammen #1825; D. Daly #345; J. Stajcar #2064; R. Harreld #2653; C. Laux #3827; J. Gesell-Supak #3822; W. Gordon

#2003; W. Smirl #3535; E. Harrington #2107; D. Ryan #1988; C. Grund #3424; M. Jones #3249; J. Christian #2644; M. Holmberg #2174; P. Jack #1845; R. Nelson #3314; D. Elespuru #2764; D. Young #2612; F. Jaqueth #3269; R. Parker #3038; M. Staples #2426; A. Cope #3709; C. Savage #2993; T. Beaulieu #2906; W. Madsen #2528; A. Oliver #3464; R. Hooten #3285; S. Boerner #2867; K. Denesen #3697; T. Wise #3612; G. Olsen #3561; K. Hesla #3841; G. Martin #2881; E. Berki #3594; E. Ternes #3664; L. Barnes #2903; A. Ahluwalia #3483; M. Hanson #3169; S. Knudson #3334; A. Thompson #2865; and D. Everett #3823.

Please remember, if your original license was granted in Montana, you will not be able to transfer it to another state if you allow your Montana license to lapse or be revoked. If you have any questions, please call the Montana Board of Pharmacy at 406/841-2356.

Legislative Session 2001

As many of you are aware, the Board of Pharmacy along with the University of Montana and the Montana State Pharmaceutical Association prepared legislation to update the pharmacy practice act. The legislation was introduced by Representative Joe McKenney, from Great Falls. House Bill #279 has passed the House of Representatives and was scheduled for hearing on March 5, 2001, before the Senate Health, Welfare and Safety Committee. Please watch for updates and rule proposals to support the new legislation in May, June, and July.

Page 4 – April 2001

The *Montana Board of Pharmacy News* is published by the Montana Board of Pharmacy and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Foundation, Inc, to promote voluntary compliance of pharmacy and drug law. The opinions and views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official views, opinions, or policies of the Foundation or the Board unless expressly so stated.

Cami Robson - State News Editor

Carmen A. Catizone, MS, RPh - National News Editor & Executive Editor

Courtney M. Karzen - Editorial Manager

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Chicago, Illinois
Permit No. 5744

MONTANA BOARD OF PHARMACY

700 Busse Highway
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068

National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Foundation, Inc.